

BULLETIN  
OF THE  
**American Iris Society**

July, 1926

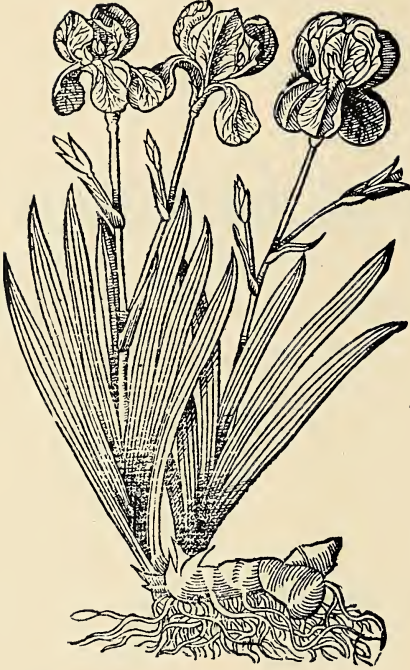
No. 20

*Edited by the Secretary*  
R. S. STURTEVANT

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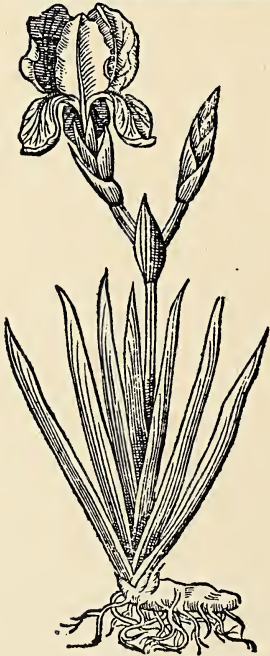
1 *Iris vulgaris*.  
Flower de-luce.



2 *Iris palustris lutea*.  
Water flags, or Flower de-luce.



1 *Iris Florentina*.  
Flower de-luce of Florence.



2 *Iris alba*.  
White Flower de-luce.



# The Iris of Gerard's Herball

By B. Y. Morrison.

There is a certain interest in examining the history of any garden plant through the years, and the following text with its copious quotations from Gerard's Herball published in 1597, is offered in the hope that others to whom this text is not available will find in it as much pleasure as the writer has done. Gerard was chosen, not because he alone is important among the many early writers, but because his work is very often mentioned and although it does not mark any special plateau of botanical or medicinal lore, it is interesting in stressing a side of plant lore that we have largely abandoned to-day.

The interest that attaches to any foreword or preface is increased in this case many times over by the statements both in prose and poetry, in Latin and in English, in which the several friends and patrons of the author endorse his capacities and his accomplishments. The author himself addresses a final letter "To the courteous and well-willing Reader" and remains "Thy sincere and unfained friend."

Proceeding to the actual body of the book, it is surprising to discover that the general divisions of plants into groups that correspond to our monocotyledons and dicotyledons have been accomplished although they are not so called and that although there is no well organized classification into genera, such as was developed later, the larger plant families have been recognized more or less by their more superficial similarities. But many strange bedfellows still appear as in the case of the bulbous iris which are given shoulder to shoulder with hemerocallis and Galtonia. But this side of the treatment should not be overstressed as in any arrangement of text as here, sequence will bring curious groupings.

Beginning with a general quotation we have:

"Of the Flower de-luce. Chap. 34.

## The Kindes

There be many Kindes of Iris, or Flower de-luce, whereof some are tall and great, some little, small and lowe, some smell exceeding sweete in the roote, some haue not anie smell at all: some flowers are sweete in smell, and some without: some of one colour, some of many colours mixed: vertues attributed to some, others not remembered: some haue tuberous or knobbie rootes, others Bulbus or Onion rootes: some haue leaues like flags, others like grasses or rushes.

## The Descriptions

The common Flower de-luce hath long and large flaggie leaues, like the blade of a sworde, with two edges, amongst which spring up smooth and plaine stalkes, two feet long, bearing flowers toward the top, compact of sixe leaues, joined together, whereof three that stand upright are bent inward one toward another, and in those leaues that hang downward, there are certain rough or hairie welts, growing or rising from the neather part of the leaf upward, almost of a yellow colour. The rootes be thick, long and knobby, with many hairie threeds hanging thereat.

## The place

2. The water Flower de-luce or water flag, or bastard **Acorus**, is like unto the garden Flower de-luce in rootes, leaues and stalks, but the leaues are much longer somtimes of the height of fower cubits and altogether narrower: the flower is a perfect yellow colour and the roote

knobbie like the other, but being cut, it seemeth to be the colour of raw flesh.

The water Flower de-luce or yellow flag, prospereth well in moist meadows, and in the borders and brinckes of rivers, ponds, and standing lakes. And although it be a water plant by nature, yet being planted in gardens, it prospereth well.

#### The time

These flower in May and June, bringing forth their square cods, full of large yellowish flat seeds, ioined or piled together like little cheeses.

#### The names

Flower de-luce is called in Greek **ieus**: Atheneus and Theophrastus de read **ieus**: as though they should say, **consecratix**: by which name it is also called of the Latins, **Radix marica**: or rather **Radix Naronica**, of the river Naron, by which the best and greatest store do growe: whereupon **Nicander** in his "Treacles"\* commendeth it thus,

Iridem quam aluit Drilon et Naronis ripa.  
which may be Englished

**Iris**, which **Drilon** water feedes,

And **Narons** bancke with other weedes.

The Italians **Giglio azurro**: in Spanish **Lilio cardeno**: in French **Flambe**: in Germanes **Gilgen**, **Schwertel**: in Dutch **Lisch**.

The second is called in Latine, **Iris palustris lutea**, **Pseudoacorus**, and **Acorus palustris**: in English, Waterflags, bastard Flower de-luce, or water Flower de-luce.

#### The nature

The rootes of the Flower de-luce being as yet fresh and greene, and full of juice, are hot almost in the fourth degree. The dried rootes are hot and drie in the third degree, burning the throat and mouth, of such as taste thereof.

The bastard Flower de-luce, his roote is colde and drie in the third degree and of an astringent or binding facultie.

#### The vertues

The roote of the common Flower de-luce clean washed and stamped, with a few drops of rose water, and laid plaister wise upon the face of man or woman, doth in two daies at the most, take away the blackness of any stroke or bruise: so that the skin of the same woman, or any other person, be very tender and delicate; it shall be needful that yee laie a piece of silke, sindall, or a piece of fine laune betweene the plaister and the skin: for otherwise in such tender bodies it often causeth heate and inflammation.

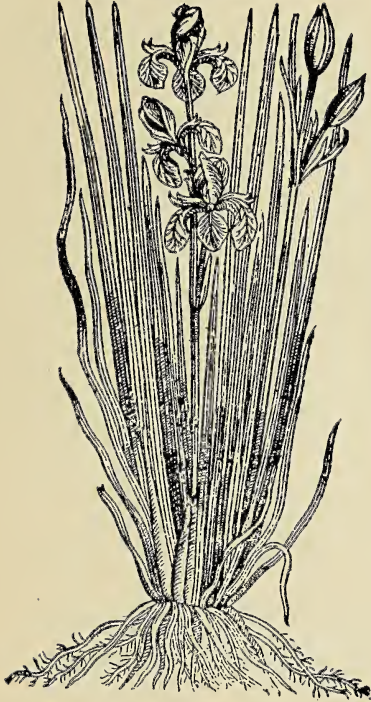
The juice of the same doth not onely mightily and vehemently drawe fourth choler but most especially waterish humours, and in a special and singular purgation for them that haue the dropsie, if it be drunke in whaie or some other liquor, that may somewhat temper and alaie his heate.

The drie rootes attenuate or make thin, thicke and rough humours, which are hardly and with difficulty purged away.

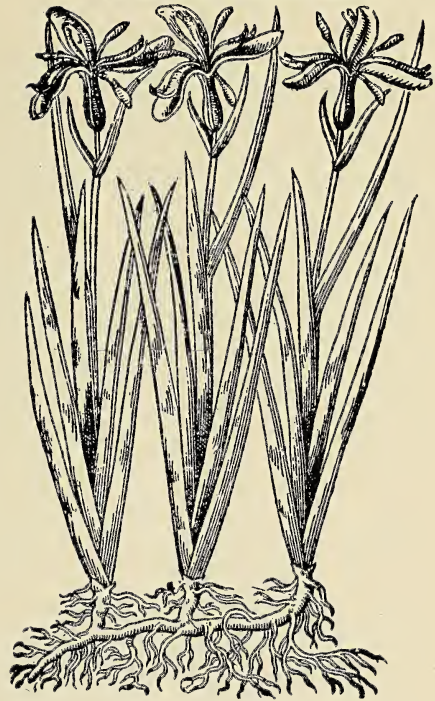
They are good in a loche or licking medicine for shortness of breath, an old cough, and all infirmities of the chest, which risé heereupon.

\*Nicander, "Theriaca"

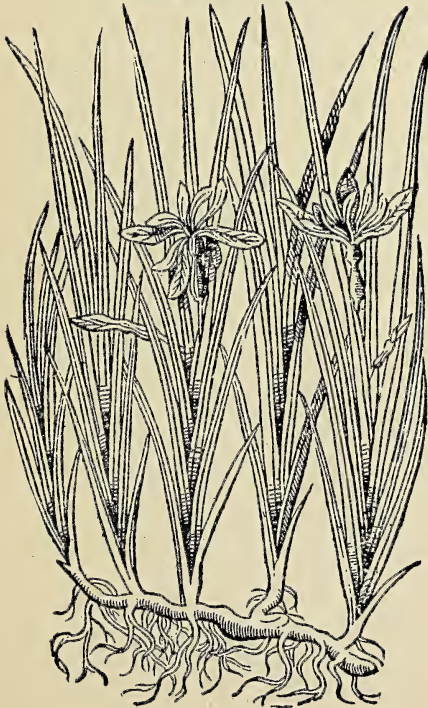
3 *Iris sylvestris* Bizantina.  
Wilde Bizantine Flower de-luce.



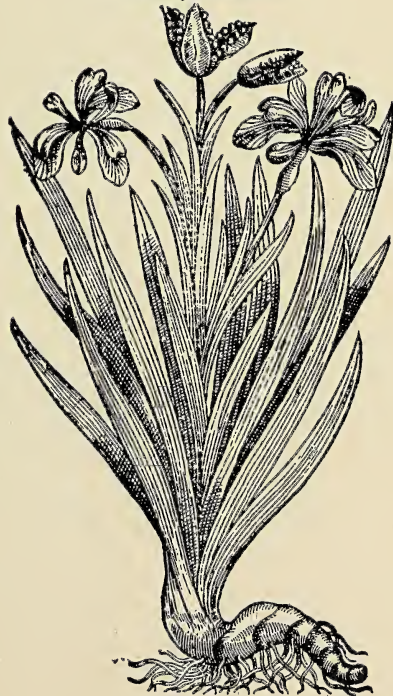
4 *Chamaeiris angustifolia*.  
Narrow leaved Flower de-luce.



5 *Chamaeiris tenuifolia*.  
Grasse Flower de-luce.



1 *Xyris*.  
Stinking Gladdon.



They remedies those that haue euill spleenes, and those that are troubled with convulsions or cramps, biting of serpents. . . . . being drunk with vinegar as saith **Dioscorides**: . . . . .”

Of the Flower de-luce of Florence. Chap. 35.

Under this head we find not only **Iris florentina** but **Iris alba** which is probably our own **Iris albicans**.

#### “The description

The Flower de-luce of Florence, whose roots in shops and generally euerywhere, are called **Ireos** or **Orice**, (whereof sweete wateres, sweete powders, and such like are made,) is altogether like unto the common Flower de-luce, saving that the flowers of this **Ireos** is of a white colour, and the rootes exceeding sweete of smell, and the other no smell at all.

The white Flower de-luce is like unto the Florentine Flower de-luce in rootes, flaggie leaues and stalkes, but they differ in that that this **Iris** hath his flower of a bleake white colour, declining to yellowness, and the rootes haue not any smell at all: but the other is very sweete as we haue saide.”

Then follow in order with their several descriptions and comments upon each:

**Iris dalmatica major**, which may well be our **Iris pallida dalmatica**.

**Iris dalmatica minor**, which may be either a small **pallida** or **Iris cenzialti**.

**Iris biflora**, with the interesting name “Twice flowering Flower de-luce” given because “In Autumne (it) flowereth againe and bringeth forth the like flowers”. This is probably **Iris aphylla**.

**Iris violacea**, said to be much like the preceding but with a figure showing seed pods like **Iris spuria** and flowers more like **Iris pseudoacorus** or some other apogon.

**Iris pannonica**, is described as if it were a variegata in which “the three leaues that stand upright to claspe or embrace one another and are of a yellow colour. The leaves that look downward about the edges are of a pale colour, the middle part of white mixed with a line of purple, and hath many small purple lines stripped over the said white flower, even to the brim of the pale coloured edge. It smelleth like Hawthorne flowers; being lightly smelled into.”

**Iris camerarij**, the German Flower de-luce, is said to have come “out of Hungarie” being sent by Camerarius to Clusius, who described and figured it. The illustration here suggests an **Oncocyclus iris** as the beard is diffuse and the carriage and venation of the flower parts is such. But as the illustrations are wood cuts and as **Iris pannonica** is drawn as a pogoniris and yet without a beard, it may be the illustrator showed some vagaries! Here too the spathes along the stem point to **Oncocyclus**.

Next follows a figure and description of

**Iris lutea variegata**, which may represent not only the typical **variegata** as we know it but also some of its natural hybrids.

**Iris chalconica**, the Turkey Flower de-luce follows with a description which states that the leaves “are long and narrow” and “of a blackish Greene”. The description following is unmistakably **Iris susiana**, confirmed later when the Turkish name, **Alaia susiana**, is given. “One flower, compact of sixe great leaues. The three that stand upright are confusedly and very strangely stripped, mixed with white and a dull duskish blacke colour. The three leaves that hang downward are like a gaping hood, and are mixed in like manner; but the

white is nothing so bright as the other, and are as it were shadowed over with a dark purple colour, somewhat shining: so that according to my judgement, the whole flower is of the colour of a Ginnie hen: a rare and beautiful flower to behold."

As the accompanying figure shows broad leaves, a terminal but not solitary flower, one without striping and with a linear beard, I venture to suggest that the woodcuts for this and the Germaine Flower de-luce were interchanged by mistake!

**Iris sylvestris bizantina**, next figured is undoubtedly a form of **Iris spuria** and the two following, (in which the generic name is no longer **Iris**) **Chamaeiris angustifolia**, the narrow-leaved Flower de-luce and the Grasse Flower de-luce (**Chamaeiris tenuifolia**) appear also like **spuria** forms, possibly our present **Iris graminea**, although the rhizomes are shown as more spreading than seems correct for the latter.

To these last few iris other medicinal virtues are ascribed. From their flowers and roots an oil may be prepared like the oil from roses and lilies: "which oil profiteth much to strengthen the sinews and joints, helpeth the crampe, and the disease called in the Greeke, **Peripneumonia**."

The flowers of the French Flower de-luce (**Iris spuria**, probably) distilled with **Diatron sandalon** and Cinnamon, and the water drunke, preuaileth greatly against the dropsie, as testifieth Hollerius and Gesnerus."

The last iris in this group is the Stinking Gladdon, **Xyris**, with text and figure accurately if incompletely describing our **Iris foetidissima**. This of all the iris has the greatest virtues, couering such a range of new properties that the plant becomes almost a cureall.

Far removed from their kin and here made neighbors with Asphodels, Anthericums, Squills, Hemerocallis and Alliums, we find the bulbous iris which are all members of the section we know as **Xiphium**. Yellow coloured forms are specially mentioned and other colours are known. The first of the group is said to grow wild in England but the others are imported from Spain. The fourth plant figured, the "Ash coloured Flower de luce" is perhaps no iris at all for the flower stalk is shown rising from the heart of what appears to be an enduring bulb and not from a basal crown with new bulbs of either side as should be the case in these iris. Gerarde himself says: "This pale yellow ash-coloured bulbous Flower de-luce (if there be any such) agreeth with the former in description. I say if there be any such, for in mine there is none such differing from the other".

The related **Iris sisyrinchium** and **Iris tuberosa** conclude the discussion of the group and of these the latter is now assigned by the botanists to another genus and is known by the name **Hermodactylus tuberosa**. No special virtues are assigned these save that the first was eaten in salads as an aphrodisiac.

The illustrations that are reproduced are from photographs from the original book, and inspite of the processes of reproduction show somewhat of the original charm of the woodcut. The conventional treatment of the entire plant and the tendency to squeeze the whole figure into the limits of the block, often give an extraneous charm to the cut, less so here than in some of the still older books.

7 *Iris Pannonica.*  
Portingale Flower de-luce.



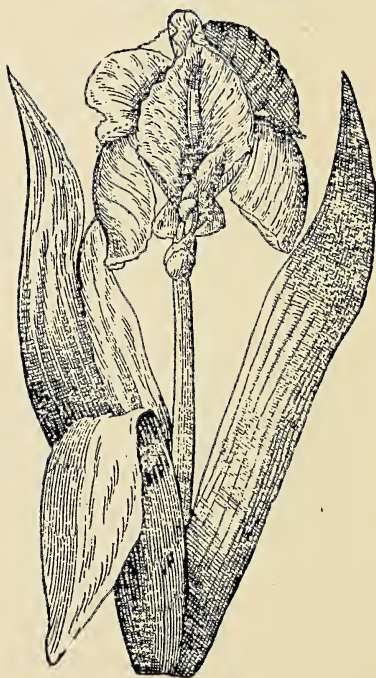
8 *Iris Camerony.*  
Germane Flower de-luce.



1 *Iris lutea variegata.*  
Variable Flower de-luce.



2 *Iris Chalcedonica.*  
Turkie Flower de-luce.





# Iris Combinations

Mrs. E. A. S. Peckham, New York

Iris Halfdan  
Tulip Bouton d'Or  
Scilla Campanulata Excelsior  
Iris Ingeborg  
Tulip Moonlight  
Tulip Bronze Queen  
Scilla campanulata Excelsior  
Iris Ingeborg  
Iris Fritjof  
Tulip The Fawn  
Phlox divaricata canadensis  
Iris Dolphin  
Tulip Inglescombe yellow  
Alyssum saxatile  
Tulip Bouton d'or  
Camassia Leichtlini  
Tulipa clusiana  
Phlox divaricata  
Scilla campanulata alba  
Tulip gesneriana ixioides  
Tulip Miss Wilmott  
Wisteria  
Pansies (purple)  
Iris The Bride or Ingeborg  
Tulip Paladin  
Tulip The Fawn  
Phlox divaricata canadensis  
Iris Fritjof  
Tulip Jubilee  
Tulip Sophrosyne  
Scilla campanulata Rose Queen  
Tulip Flamingo  
Tulip Mareschal Victor  
Tulip Copernicus  
Primula veris  
Chieranthus Allioni  
Phlox subulata lilacina  
Tulip Bleu Aimable  
Tulip Honeymoon  
Iris Fritjof  
Iris Queen Flavia  
Scilla campanulata alba  
Iris Germanica  
Tulip Sophrosyne  
Scilla campanulata alba  
Tulip Cardinal Manning  
Tulip Sir Harry  
White Wisteria  
Iberis  
Muscari argaei  
Phlox subulata lilacina  
Tulipa Galatica  
Scilla campanulata Rose Queen  
Iris Charmant  
Tulip Sir Harry  
Alyssum saxatile  
Scilla campanulata Excelsior  
Tulip fulgens lutea pallida  
Iris The Bride  
Alyssum saxatile  
Iris Fritjof  
Iris Fritjof  
Tulip Bronze Queen  
Tulip Moonlight  
Phlox divaricata  
Tulip Inglescombe yellow  
Tulip Dainty Maid  
Phlox divaricata canadensis or  
scilla campanulata Excelsior  
Tulip Rev. Ewbank  
Iris Florentina  
Iris Germanica  
Tulip Sir Harry  
Iris Florentina  
Scilla campanulata Rose Queen  
Iris Charmant  
Tulip Gretchen (Margaret)  
Primula veris  
Tulip Sir Harry  
White Violets  
Bechtel's Flowering Crab  
Wisteria chinensis  
Tulip Avis Kennicott  
Tulip Moonlight  
Phlox divaricata canadensis  
(Laphamii var.)  
Tulip Flava  
Myosotis  
Tulip Prince Albert  
Iris Florentina  
Primula Seeboldi  
Tulipa galatica  
Phlox divaricata canadensis  
Muscari paradoxum  
Primula acaulis (pale yellow)  
Muscari polyanthum  
Primula veris  
Myosotis

# Problems in Iris Development

J. Marion Shull

Devotees of the Iris have recently been deeply agitated and concerned over the excessive number of new varieties, or perhaps one should say new names, that have been added to the Iris lists during the last several years. There seems to be some rivalry and disagreement as to who shall be awarded the palm as the greater offender, our own American breeders or their equally enterprising cousins across the water. Perhaps an experienced psychologist would be able to analyze this sudden access of zeal among breeders and others, and explain for us the underlying motives that prompted the bulk of these introductions, whether for paltry financial gain, for hope of glory, or just to satisfy some personal whim. Incidentally many a good name has been pre-empted till there is a dearth of suitable, even moderately descriptive or remotely suggestive, names left wherewith to bedeck the new arrival that really deserves a Christening. Indeed this wasting of good names is a worse calamity than the deluge of unneeded and unwanted varieties. One can avoid the latter and abandon them to oblivion, but the name goes down in a permanent register where for centuries to come it will flaunt its glaring "Verboten" to the gaze of the name-hungry breeder of that remoter age.

Assuming that the eruption of 1923 has somewhat relieved the pressure and that we may not again expect to see quite such an embarrassing outburst; assuming likewise that there may still be room for an occasional legitimate introduction, that the Iris group has still some gaps in it and is still capable of being improved in certain respects, it may not be out of place to canvass once more the essential qualifications of a really good iris and to set down with more or less precision those deficiencies that still remain for the breeder to supply. If we can set before the breeders of Iris a clear conception of the things yet to be desired, and which are not obviously unattainable, and perhaps at the same time warn away from certain other things that, though possibly desirable are apparently quite unattainable, then we may hope by such guidance to secure a steady if slow advance and also to avoid the duplication or the addition to mediocrity which is so widely deplored at present.

First to touch on the general qualities that every really good Iris must possess, before going on to particulars, there must be a fair degree of vigor and a disposition to thrive under average conditions, remembering, however, that growth may be too rampant as well as too reluctant. Hardiness can not be over-done, but on the other hand it is not necessary to insist upon arctic resistance when so large a part of the country is possessed of a milder climate. Thus only extreme tenderness should be a bar on the score of hardiness, but true information concerning varieties not entirely hardy should be freely given to the public.

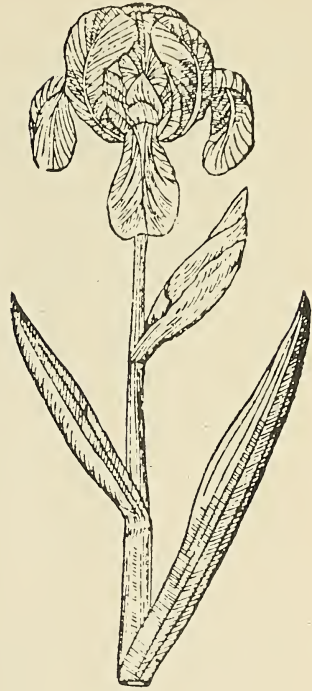
The Iris flower occurs in a number of elegant forms and while many people have very decided preferences in regard to form there is no form that in itself is inherently better than any other. Rather within each form there is beauty or the reverse according as it is well proportioned and well balanced as to its separate elements. If standards are either too large or too small for association with the falls the effect will be unsatisfactory no matter whether the form be horizontal, flaring, or vertical. Conversely if the proportion be just right any of these forms will meet every requirement of beauty and in that case many another desirable attribute may yet be dispensed with and the flower still be worth growing.

A certain consideration needs to be given to the poise and bearing of

3 *Iris Dalmatica maior.*  
Great Flower de-luce of Dalmatia.



4 *Iris Dalmatica minor.*  
Small Dalmatica Iris.



5 *Iris Biflora.*  
Twice flowering Flower de-luce.



6 *Iris Violacea.*  
Violet Flower de-luce.



the flower but here also charm is mainly a question of right proportion; size of bloom as related to length of lateral branches and to total height of stem; placement of laterals along the main stem; relation of stem to height of foliage if concerned with garden effect; all things that can not be stated with exact measurement but which the esthetic mind will feel for itself and know even when it can not analyze the cause of such feeling for the benefit of others. In fact beauty, aside from color, is almost wholly dependent upon proportional relationships.

In regard to color the personal equation enters in as a still greater disturbing factor. Each of us may say "I like this color and I dislike that" but we have no right to say categorically that one color is beautiful and another is not. To a large extent it is a matter of personal taste. Naturally there will be greater agreement at certain points than at others, since there are few people who would not admire a glowing yet delicate lavender or rose pink, and likewise few who would care for the dull and muddy blends that sometimes occur, but then these are almost polar extremes and between them is a vast range of tints and shades where we can hope for no agreement even among iris enthusiasts as to which are most beautiful and which are least. Besides, there are two or perhaps more uses for the iris which must be considered and the color that makes a beautiful and effective mass in the garden or on the lawn may not be satisfactory at all when taken within doors as a cut flower or subjected to artificial light, whereas another that may be inconspicuous or even dull in the landscape may reverse the situation by fairly captivating all eyes when taken inside. Of course the variety that serves equally well in both situations is superior to either of the others, but we must admit there is a legitimate place for these special purpose varieties.

In this recapitulation for ourselves of the various attributes that properly belong to a good Iris freedom and profusion of bloom are of significant value both for landscape and garden effect and that an abundance of stems may be available for cutting when desired, but the value of profusion of bloom may sometimes be lost through unsatisfactory placement which crowds the individual flowers too greatly. Closely related to freedom and profusion of bloom is the length of the blooming period, always an item of much importance in the garden. It is chiefly dependent upon the number of buds that habitually appear on each lateral. Such a beautiful flower as Firmament has its value greatly lessened by reason of its usual production of but a single bud to the lateral. Its period of bloom may not go very far into the second week, *Tineae*, which produces habitually three flowers to the lateral, thereby prolongs its blooming period to three and even four weeks.

In the matter of size it is to be doubted if there is any general need for increase over what we already have. Our largest blooms now attain a height of six inches or a trifle more, and an equal spread across as they naturally stand. Conceivably they may be produced of still greater magnitude, but the relationship of size to inability to face wind and weather is one of those things where the difference is measured by the square instead of by simple proportion. In the landscape, size of bloom helps to produce mass of color and in a general way is desirable, but a flower a foot in diameter would be a monstrosity and would probably have small value save as a freak to be protected and coddled and displayed on occasion to an exclaiming public. Thus it would appear that if there is any thing in the way of size still worthy of the breeder's striving for it probably lies in the direction of petiteness rather than the reverse, say something of perfect form and color but with flowers not more than half the size of Fairy or Quaker Lady, both rather below av-

erage size at present. Of course the value of such a diminutive desirable would not be in its size alone and would fail completely if not bracketed with the highest perfection of form and color.

In texture there is already a wide range but the various textures are not yet available in a wide range of different colors. There does not appear to be any general understanding of the underlying causes of texture differences, nor does the subject seem to have been studied in great detail yet. The effect of velvet is given when the surface is deeply and densely papillate, but so far this has been noted only in connection with dark, strong colors. If this condition occurs in white or light colored flowers it has not come prominently to notice. Perhaps the velvety effect would not be especially striking except when combined with great strength of color but there would seem to be no reason why it might not be present in these lighter colored flowers. A sparkling almost frost-like surface is probably produced by surface cells that round up and are somewhat irregular in size, but without greater study under the microscope, it is hazardous to attempt an explanation of silken sheen, and still more the shot-silk effect that occasionally appears. The terry-cloth texture of Zua is quite extreme and it might be interesting to have this in a few other colors and in plants of greater height but this texture, while very novel, necessarily lowers the brilliancy of the color to such an extent that these can never compete with others when considered for landscape purposes. They would only possess value for their novelty, to be enjoyed at close range.

As in the case of size so height has about reached the extreme limit of desirability. Garden demands call for all heights from just above the ground up to whatever this limit of desirability may be, but the lower and middle heights have been so easily provided for and have been so abundantly supplied in all sorts of color and form as to practically preclude these height ranges from the breeder's further interest. Only in the upper ranges are there gaps that need to be filled. Certain colors are still missing among these three-and-a-half-and four-foot aristocrats, so if the breeder thinks for the most part in terms of considerable height it is not so much because tallness in itself is so valuable but because the field there is less crowded. But in the consideration of height we are again face to face with proportion. Stems of great height rising from dwarfish foliage and bearing a few moderate sized flowers at the top would be little less than ridiculous. If great height is to be obtained it must still be in proper relationship to height of foliage, and to size and placement of flowers, or it will not prove a very valuable acquisition.

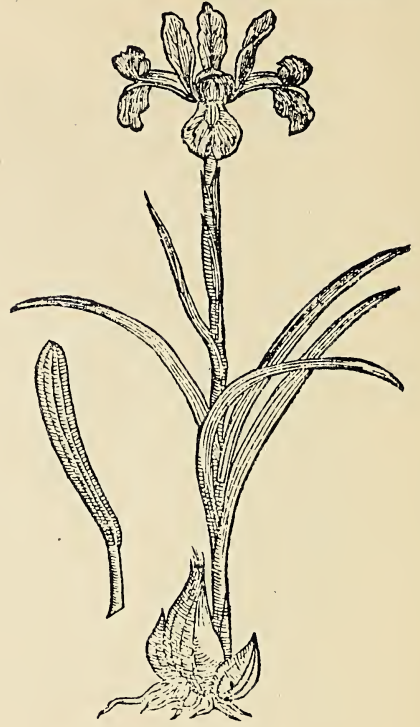
In addition to all that has gone before an Iris may be valuable because of its adaptability to certain environmental conditions. Perhaps it will thrive where most others fail. Naturally this is a very limited field and on this account one that is not often deliberately entered by the breeder and so it happens that any "find" of this kind is usually to be looked upon as the result of lucky accident rather than the culmination of deliberate purpose. An Iris that would grow and bloom freely in shade would extend immensely the range of Iris usefulness in the garden, but the likelihood of securing such a variety is too remote to tempt the breeder into the very extensive and expensive work that would be involved. It takes more courage and optimism than most of us have to attack a problem that seems foredoomed to failure even before it is begun.

And now to consider in some detail a few of the things we may reasonably hope for and which the breeder has not yet given us, things that will possess all the general good qualities already specified and at

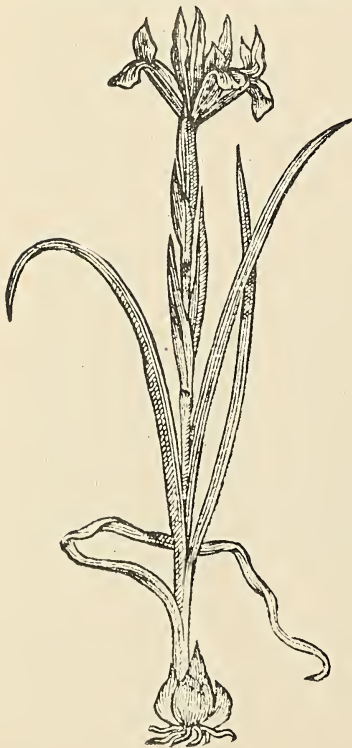
1 *Iris bulbosa*.  
Onion Flower de-luce.



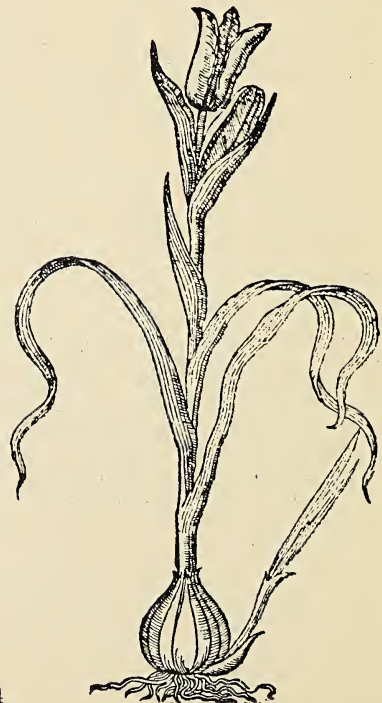
2 *Iris bulbosa flore vario*.  
Changeable Flower de-luce.



3 *Iris bulbosa flore luteo*.  
Yellow bulbed Flower de-luce.



4 *Iris bulbosa flore pallido*.  
Ash colourde Flower de-luce.



the same time meet an as yet unfulfilled desire. No attempt is made to present these in the order of their importance for indeed there can be no such order of importance except as it exists in the individual mind of each one who gives it thought.

We still need a better white than anything even moderately well-known. It may be already in existence somewhere, but this is very much to be doubted. Newer whites may be an improvement upon those already known until we have a white flower of form and substance equal to *Pallida Dalmatica*, or *Princess Beatrice* if you prefer to call it by that name, a white flower equally dependable with this as to growth and hardness and height of stem, and unmarred with any conspicuous veining at the throat, we still have work for the breeder to do along this line.

The same holds true of yellow selfs. We have *Shekinah* and its successors, and *Virginia Moore*, all decided improvements over the older yellow selfs, but could we have a *Dalmatica* in every other respect with the luminous color of *Virginia Moore* it would be so far superior to any yellow self known at present that it would produce a major sensation in the Iris world.

We are approaching and it does not seem impossible that sometime we shall attain the red-brown self. The combining of yellow plastids and red-purple anthocyanin has reached almost the perfection of true red in the falls of several recent varieties but the depth of the two mingling colors is still not sufficient in the standards and the flower remains a bi-color. The possession now of possible parents with rich yellow throughout the flower, and of approximate selfs in deep red-toned sap colors would seem to bring the red, or red-brown, self within the range of possibility and a *Gaudichau* with the deeper color of *L'Aiglon* throughout would be well worth years of striving for.

Then there is still room for greater approach to true blue. It may be doubted whether the blue of a Japanese morning-glory can ever be attained in Iris but it would seem possible that at least some advance in this direction might be made.

In the yellow *plicata* we have only a beginning in *Montezuma*, with *Loudoun* as yet the most advanced step, but *Loudoun* is still little more than an assurance that some time in the future we may have *plicatas* with really bright yellow ground. Of course, in that case the frill will be necessarily red-brown or of the color and quality we usually designate as a blend. Unavoidably this will always be a close-range flower for the effect would lack the glowing quality desirable in a good landscape variety. But intense yellow with a red-brown frill would be a very decided novelty, especially if it could be achieved now in a single advance from what we already have.

It is desirable thus to set up guide posts for the better guidance of the producer of new varieties it may be almost equally desirable to set up warnings along the way against the entering of blind alleys, the attempting the impossible. Just to make the point more specific, here are several flowers of the imagination, flowers that might possibly be very beautiful indeed. Imagine for instance an Iris with snowy white standards and rich yellow falls, a lovely yellow bi-color; or the reverse, with yellow standards and white falls! Possibly less beautiful but nevertheless quite thinkable, would be one with white standards and blended falls; or we might have a whole strain of varying purples with dark standards and light falls. All these look good to the unfettered imagination and it seems almost too bad to have to declare them one and all inherently impossible. So far as we now know the yellow color when present in the petalage at all is present in both standards and falls and since it is the mingling of this yellow color with the purple sap that produces a blend

it follows as a matter of course that there can be no such combination as white and blend in the same flower. Here then is a field for the imagination but not for the practical breeder. To be successful it is true he must be liberally endowed with that gift of the gods but imagination must be firmly based upon facts and a knowledge of limitations, otherwise it is no more than a futile pipe-dream, to be indulged in only before a glowing fireplace in the dead of winter.

It will be seen that there are still quite a few desirable things to be done in the development of the Iris but for the benefit of the less experienced worker in this line let it be said once for all that there is little hope of worth-while accomplishment being derived from the sowing of chance set seed nor from the mating of mediocre varieties. Let him grow seedlings if he will, by way of gaining experience and for the sheer enjoyment and zest of the thing, but unless the result should fit in somewhere with the suggestions that have here been made let them remain a source of joy in the garden of their origin but don't go ransacking literature or the dictionary for a fetching name. It will hardly be worth while.

## Iris Exhibitions — 1926

While listing the reports of the Iris Exhibitions, I wish to thank all the local Committees for the kindly spirit in which they have cooperated with the Exhibition Committee during the past few months, and for the promptness with which these reports have been forwarded. I was very glad to have the opportunity of meeting some of you at the shows I was able to attend, thus being able to discuss personally with you our present show policies and to have your ideas with regard to possible ways of improvement. Several local Committees made an especial effort this year to interest the novice, adding several special classes for them, as well as the ones generally in use. The Show schedules have been very fine, many calling for 25 or more classes. In several schedules I have found A. I. S. memberships offered as prizes; Harrisburg and Columbus each offered three; Redlands gave two, and Rochelle and Lexington each gave one. Surely this is a splendid way to interest the beginner in the work being done by the Society. While the Committees report an increase in the number of exhibitors and the interest being shown, I feel there is always room for improvement, and I should like to see each grower begin now to plan for next year's shows. No matter how hard a Show Committee may work to make the show a success, how comprehensive their schedule may be, unless each exhibitor realizes and accepts his own responsibility, they will have toiled with little reward. It is with this fact in mind I wish each grower would, in thinking over the shows just past (whether they have been exhibitors or only interested visitors) consider four main features in connection with exhibitions; quality of bloom; correct amount of material as specified in classes; varieties correctly named and careful entry in the correct class. At one of the shows, an entry had to be disqualified for incorrect amount of material, which otherwise would have received a first prize, and, as the Medals were awarded for points, would have assured the Medal to the exhibitor whose entry it was. Grow your irises so as to give specimen blooms and protect the stalks from damage as the show draws near. Follow your schedule carefully when preparing your entries. Check your garden each season in iris time to make sure your labels are correct, and if doubtful, try to have someone in whose knowledge of varieties you have confidence, check it with you. Each season sees improvement, but I feel confident if we pay more attention to these details, our shows will reach perfection.

MRS. J. EDGAR HIRES, Chairman.



### Redlands, Calif.

On April 15th., and 16th., the Redlands Horticultural and Improvement Society held its Spring Flower Show. In the Iris division there were 250 entries, S. Stillman Berry winning the American Iris Society's Bronze Medal, while Clarence G. White won the Redlands Society's Cup for the most perfect exhibit in the show, six wonderful spikes of William Mohr, thus repeating his success of last season, when he won with Avalon. Mr. White also won the Cup offered to the winner of the most points in the Open Division. The San Bernardino Sun Cup, offered to the winner of the most points in the Amateur Division, was won by Edgar R. Fisher. A Certificate of Honorable Mention was awarded to Mr. Berry's Seedling No. 181. While I have no description of this Seedling, Mr. Berry last season wrote that it is remarkable for the rich reddish tone of the falls, and from its picture I judge it to be of fine form, well branched, with the blooms well placed. It is interesting to note that in a class for six stalks, one variety, E. R. Fisher took a second with Mme Chereau, in competition with Ballerine, Lent A. Williamson, Tamerlane, Isoline. Last season Mme. Chereau was the best specimen in the Lynchburg show, in competition with many of the latest novelties. Mr. Berry staged a carefully labeled educational exhibit of over seventy varieties. This is a splendid idea, and one which should be more generally adopted. Redlands was most fortunate in having as judges Mr. Jacob Sass, of Omaha, and Dr. Wylie McL. Ayres, of Cincinnati. Some of the outstanding varieties in this show were: San Gabriel, Aphrodite, Mrs. Marion Cran, Marjorie Tinley, Mrs. Hetty Matson, Conquistador, Bolingbroke, Yellow Hammer, Salonique, Princess Beatrice, Imperator, William Mohr, Nancy Orne, Rialgar, Warrior, Santa Barbara, Gold Imperial, Mme. Cheri, Mary Gibson, Lord Lambourne, Valkyrie, of the bearded irises, and stolonifera, hoogiana, Cacique, halophila, ochroleuca, tectorum, savannarum, watti and aurea of the other types. Two A. I. S. memberships were given in the amateur section.

A heavy rain and hail storm a few days before the show did so much damage it was feared there would be few exhibits, and the growers surely deserve much credit for the hard work they must have done to save so many fine things. This Society also held an Iris Field Day at "Whitehill," the beautiful gardens of Clarence G. White. The members of the A. I. S. who are also members of the local Society were present to act as guides and to explain the different species and varieties of irises.

### Washington, D. C.

The first Annual Iris Exhibition of the National Capital Dahlia and Iris Society was held in the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D. C., on May 25th., and 26th., Mrs. W. M. Jardine, wife of the Secretary of Agriculture, opened the exhibition, and expressed a deep and sincere interest in the flowers on display, as well as in the work of the Society. Mr. J. M. R. Adams won the Silver Medal, while the Bronze Medal, which was awarded for the best specimen stalk in the show, was won by Mr. Shull with Morning Splendor. The judges, Mrs. F. W. Harris, Mr. Thomas Fendall, and Prof. W. R. Ballard, awarded Certificates of Honorable Mention to Mr. Shull's Seedling No. 207-1, and Mr. Simpson's Seedling No. 100-4. The exhibition was staged in the beautiful Palm Court of the hotel, surely a wonderful background for the lovely color of the 10,000 iris blooms exhibited in the thirty classes. There were nine hundred varieties shown by the twenty-five exhibitors. For a new Society to stage a show of this size is quite an undertaking, and they deserve much praise. Mr. L. G. Parker, Secretary of the local Society, worked very hard to assure its success, but still is not satisfied, as he says the show next year will occupy the entire promenade of the hotel as well as the Palm Court. The night previous to the opening of the Show, Dr. E. W. Sheets, 1st Vice President of the Society gave a talk from Station WCAP on "Iris as a Hobby," giving a brief history of the iris, and the work being done by the National Society. Among the interested visitors on the last afternoon of the show, were the disabled veterans from the Walter Reed, Mt. Alto and U. S. Naval Hospitals.

### La Fayette, Indiana

Lafayette, Indiana, had its Fourth Annual Iris Show on June 4th and 5th. Exhibits were made by Goodland, Bluffton, and Logansport growers, as well as by the local people. E. B. Williamson exhibited his 1926 introduction, George J. Tribolet, and about fifty fine seedlings, two of which, Seedling No. 252, a very large, tall blend of Quaker Lady coloring, and No. 338, a medium sized apricot colored blend, were awarded Certificates of Honorable Mention by the judges, Mr. and Mrs. Harry F. Little, of Baldwinsville, N. Y. Prof. Jackson also received a Certificate for his Seedling No. 21, a tall, bright yellow, 39 inches, of fine form and substance. Another seedling which attracted

much attention was Mr. George Spitzer's No. 403, a deep purple bicolor of Archeveque parentage. Prof. Jackson won the Bronze Medal, with Mr. Spitzer a close second. In the amateur division Mr. E. J. Kohl won the Sweepstakes. Among the outstanding varieties in the show were Aphrodite, Asia, Tenebrae, Chasseur, Mildred Presby, Warrior, Susan Bliss, Imperator, Rheintrabe and Flammenschwert. The show was a marked success, though it had been hard to arrange a satisfactory date, owing to the changeable season.

### Cincinnati, Ohio

The Cincinnati Section of the American Iris Society held its exhibition in the north wing of the Eden Park Greenhouse on May 22nd, and 23rd. The Silver Medal was awarded to Mr. Lewis R. Smith, winner of the greatest number of points in the show, while Mrs. Silas B. Waters, winner of the second highest number of points was awarded the Society's Bronze Medal.

Four Certificates of Honorable Mention were given by the judges, Mr. Franklin B. Mead, Prof. H. S. Jackson and Prof. Alfred C. Hottes. To Mrs. L. O. Saur for her Seedling No. "C," rated at 89, a yellow of good size, medium substance, nine buds and blooms, branched, 36 inches. To Lewis R. Smith for his Seedling No. "B," rated at 83, a pallid violet self (comparable to Aphrodite in form and type of color blending, in that it lightens at the center), 30 inches tall, well branched, 9 buds and blooms of medium size, kidlike texture. To Miss Louise Kannapell's Seedling No. 99, rated at 82, a well branched stalk with nine buds and blooms, medium substance; color light Perilla Purple on Buff. To Dr. Ayres for his Seedling No. 307, color Dahlia Purple and rich Pansy Violet; 30 inches tall, well branched, eight buds and blooms, with extra good substance. There were twenty-five classes in the show, eighteen exhibitors and one hundred and twenty-nine entries. The Publicity Committee deserves very great credit, as, for several weeks prior to the show, they had well written articles in all the daily papers, not only with reference to the show, but on the cultivation of the iris. Mrs. Smith thinks the high-light of the Cincinnati show was the recognition that at least 25% of the winning qualities of an iris are the cultural methods used. She says there was really a contest between the best specimens of Souvenir de Mme. Gaudichau, Alcazar, Lent A. Williamson, Lady Foster, Magnifica, Queen Caterina, Aphrodite, etc. I quite agree with Mrs. Smith in thinking that we must begin in the exhibitors' gardens to raise the standard of the shows. If we are to have quality (which to my mind is of far greater importance than quantity, as I had far rather see a few classes where every stalk was a specimen, than to see a show of great size, with varieties so poorly grown it is hard to know if they are true), we must educate the exhibitors to pay more attention to cultivation. Don't wait until a few days or two or three weeks before a show to decide to exhibit, but plan this season for next year's show, and give the irises a chance to show their quality. Mrs. Smith also says the show date was too early for Cincinnati, and that very few of the newer and better irises were exhibited. It has been a very hard season to judge, and most of the local Committees have experienced the same difficulty in arranging their dates, finding in most cases that the dates set were too early, and in one or two, that they were a little late.

### Oskaloosa, Iowa

The Southern Iowa Iris Exhibition was held May 26th, and 27th, by the Garden Department of the Oskaloosa Woman's Club. This was the first iris show held by this Club, and was one of the finest ever held in the state. In fact, the judges, Mrs. Brownell of Des Moines, and Mrs. Haw of Ottumwa, acclaimed it the best and biggest show they had ever attended, saying it was a larger show than the one held in Des Moines. There were twenty-two classes, thirty-two exhibitors and over one thousand entries. The Brown Haven Flower Gardens won the Bronze Medal, which was given for most number of points won in the show. Hundreds of visitors were at the show during the two days, and it is a safe prediction that many new iris growers will be the result. One of the features of the exhibition was the miniature home garden, an example of the work being done by the Garden Club. Not a detail was lacking from the bird shelters to the fish and lily pond and the shady retreats and the flower borders. The finest specimen was a stalk of Moliere, which was also the largest flower in the show, while Juniata was the tallest. Other irises of interest were a number of fine-named seedlings from Mr. Sass, and fine specimens of Ambassadeur, Souvenir de Mme. Gaudichau, Prospero, Magnifica, etc. The interest seemed to center on the better irises, which were very pleasing. Though this was the first Iris Show held in Oskaloosa, Mrs. Brown writes they are already planning for a larger show next season.

### **Columbus, Ohio**

Mr. Syfert reports that the annual Iris Show held by the Columbus Iris Society on June 5th and 6th was well attended and that the interest in the iris in that locality is increasing each year. Frank W. Campbell and Charles B. Wing were the judges. Mr. Syfert won the Silver Cup offered by the Columbus Society as a Sweepstake, taking seven first prizes in the twenty-five classes. An Ambassadeur, exhibited by Miss Grace Miller, was the finest specimen in the show. Some of the varieties of outstanding merit were: Phyllis Bliss, Anne Bullen, Magnifica, Cecil Minturn, Titan, Mrs. Hetty Matson, Peau Rouge, Mrs. Walter Brewster, Mildred Presby, Simone Waissiere, Prospero, Shekinah, Lycæna, B. Y. Morrison, Mother of Pearl, True Charm and Ballerine. The Columbus schedule is one of the finest I have seen this season, and I regret very much that through an oversight on the part of the local committee, the cooperation of the A. I. S. was not requested this year. We are looking forward with much pleasure, to again cooperating with the Columbus Society in its next show.

### **Lexington, Ky.**

The Garden Club of Lexington, Ky., held the Annual Spring Flower Show on May 26th. It is very hard to select a date when all the spring flowers will be at their best, especially in a season such as the present one, but here irises, roses, peonies, oriental poppies, all splendidly grown, were shown in masses. In the Iris section of the show, Mrs. William L. Carter won the Bronze Medal in competition with a field of thirty-two. Dr. John W. Scott won the Silver Vase, offered by the Garden Club of Lexington to the winner of the second highest number of points in the Iris Section. The judges, Messrs. John C. Wister and Franklin B. Mead and Mrs. J. Edgar Hires, awarded the Special Prize, an Iris Leonato, given by Frank W. Campbell for the best specimen stalk in the show, to Dr. Scott, for his splendid stalk of Kashmir White, which Mr. Wister said was the finest specimen of this variety he had seen outside of England. Mr. Campbell's prize for the best exhibit by one who has never exhibited in an Iris show, was won by Prof. B. B. McInteer. In the Dr. Scott collection were noted fine spikes of Morning Splendor and Dominion. Other fine specimens were Leverrier, Mlle. Schwartz, Mildred Presby, Queen Caterina, Shekinah, Grapta Argynnis, Aphrodite and Mother of Pearl. The exhibition in general compared very favorably with the early spring shows of Boston, New York and Philadelphia, outstanding features being the tea garden arranged at the stage of the auditorium, and the rock garden, which had been built between the stage and the main floor. Here were shown the wild flowers and ferns of the Kentucky cliffs, as found growing in their natural haunts. A small stream trickling down over the rocks into a tiny pool, around the banks of which were planted small rock ferns and mosses, added greatly to the artistic effect. Mrs. Peckham, Mrs. Emigholtz, Mr. and Mrs. Mead, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Norton and Mr. Wister, who were among the interested visitors, all said it was one of the finest shows they had ever attended.

### **Belvidere, Ill.**

Mr. Sam Burchfield judged the Belvidere, Ill. Iris Show, held June 2nd and 3rd, which was very good, considering that many of the best irises were not in bloom in time for the show, and that a very high wind, blowing steadily for two days preceding, had badly switched those which were in bloom. There were twenty-five exhibitors, many showing in a number of classes. There were twenty-seven classes, their Group 4, which was open only to growers of twenty varieties or less, containing seven classes. This group was of especial interest to me, containing as it did, a class for artistic arrangement, three classes for specimen stalks, as well as the usual classes for six and three distinct varieties. I feel more attention should be paid to the novice classes. It would seem that the majority of the schedules are planned for the exhibitor with rather large collections, which is rather disheartening to the beginner or the grower with small collections. Mrs. Kuppler writes that the Belvidere Club makes an especial effort to interest new growers, to make possible the beautifying of their city by having a flower garden in every yard, and that each year finds a few more added to the list of amateur growers. Mlle. Schwartz, Shekinah, White Queen, Seminole, Knysna, Opera, Queen Caterina, Anne Leslie, Ballerine, Alcazar, Zua, Souvenir de Mme. Gaudichau, Mother of Pearl, Gold Crest, Afterglow, Magnifica, Blue King, Geo. Wallace, Perry's Blue, Parvar and Graminea were among the outstanding varieties.

### **Monticello, Virginia**

The Garden Clubs of Virginia united this spring to hold a Flower Show at Monticello, the financing of the restoration of the wonderful trees planted

by Thomas Jefferson, being the worthy object. The Iris group was staged and sponsored by the James River Garden Club, with Mrs. George Tower as Chairman. We were very sorry not to be able to cooperate with the Richmond members this season, but hope they will give us that opportunity again next year.

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#### **Rochelle, Ill.**

This year we had the pleasure of cooperating with the Garden Club of Rochelle, Illinois, in their Second Annual Iris Exhibition. Their schedule was a very fine one, with several well balanced classes for exhibitors whose gardens contained less than ten varieties. Mr. and Mrs. Boehland were the judges, Mrs. Boehland judging the artistic arrangements. Among the interested out-of-town visitors, were some from Oregon and Utah, as well as from nearby states. The Bronze Medal was awarded to Mrs. R. C. Brundage, President of the Garden Club, who scored the most number of points in the show. Mrs. Holloway staged a very fine exhibit of over fifty varieties. Mrs. Barber writes that the show was a decided success, the quality of the blooms very fine, and several new members were obtained for the A. I. S.

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#### **Wilmington, Delaware**

The Garden Club of Wilmington, Delaware, held their show on May 26th. I am sorry I have no report of this exhibition. I trust that another year we may have the pleasure of cooperating with this Club.

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#### **Harrisburg, Pa.**

The Iris Club of Harrisburg, Pa., held its Exhibition on June 2nd and 3rd. There were sixty-two exhibitors, an increase of fifteen over last year, which speaks well for the activity of the members of this Club. The quality of the flowers was not up to the usual high standard of the Harrisburg shows, owing to a heavy thunderstorm the previous afternoon which caused much damage to all the gardens. Mrs. Frank A. Robbins won the Silver Medal, for the greatest number of winning points, while the Bronze Medal was awarded by the judges, Messrs. Connell and Rowe, and Mrs. J. Edgar Hires, to Mrs. M. W. Jacobs, for her very fine specimen stalk of Isoline. Though primarily an Iris exhibition, there were several classes calling for artistic arrangements of roses, peonies and other perennials, in which many very fine varieties were noted. J. Horace McFarland had on display some of the new species of shrubs, and several of the newer rose species and hybrids. These were at all times the center of much interest. Mrs. O'Connor reports over 1600 visitors in the one and one-half days the show was open to the public. No prizes were given, ribbons being awarded. Each exhibitor, however, was given a very choice iris rhizome, upon entering, a plan which I liked very much. Three A. I. S. memberships were offered as Special Awards.

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#### **Freeport, Ill.**

The Fourth Annual Show of the Freeport, Ill., Garden Club was held on June 9th and 10th, and in the opinion of the throngs of visitors who crowded the hall, was by far the finest exhibition ever given under the auspices of the Club. The Silver Medal was awarded to C. A. Sherman, winner of the most number of points in the show. Mr. Sherman also won the Bronze Medal for the finest specimen stalk in the show. Mrs. Douglas Pattison's exhibit, which is a non-competitive feature, adding immeasurably to the beauty of the exhibition, occupied one side of the long room, and consisted of forty large baskets of such irises as Asia, Susan Bliss, Simone Vaissiere, Imperator, etc., together with eighty specimen stalks of the finest and rarest American, French and English introductions. A collection of fine stalks of Dominion seedlings were one of the outstanding features of this exhibit. Mr. Lee R. Bonnewitz, in judging the show, commented upon the perfection of the bloom and the wide range of good varieties shown. As the Freeport gardens contain the finest of the new varieties, the old, ordinary varieties so often shown were lacking, though the display was a very large one. A Japanese tea house occupied the stage, presenting an attractive appearance with its trailing wisteria and gay awnings. One feature of the exhibition was an oval pool in the center of the large room, surrounded by a flagged path and beautiful competitive border plantings, which gave one the impression of a real garden. Mrs. W. L. Karcher, President of the Club, had charge of the staging and arrangement of the show. Mrs. Karcher is quite noted for her artistic ability.

### Lynchburg, Va.

Miss Josephine P. Kinnier, the very enthusiastic manager of the Lynchburg, Virginia, Show reports the absence from the city of several of the regular exhibitors, which cut down the number of entries. Lynchburg has long had the reputation of staging very fine Iris exhibitions, and I am sure this one, though possibly smaller, was still up to the previous high standard. The Bronze Medal was awarded to Miss Sue Adams, who scored the highest number of points. Messrs. Simpson, Peyton, and Ray all sent exhibits, but not for competition. Mr. Simpson's seedlings were of great interest to visitors, especially his Melrose. Mr. Shull judged the Iris division, in which there were one hundred and forty-eight entries. Miss Kinnier reports an increasing interest in the Iris and the work of the Society, several new members having exhibited this season. There were groups for roses, peonies, miniature gardens, and a group of children's classes. This last group seemed a very interesting one, offering classes in flower arrangement, dish gardens and bird houses. The Garden Clubs of Virginia were the guests of the Garden Club of Lynchburg.

### Takoma Park, D. C.

Mr. B. Y. Morrison, Chairman of the Iris Show at Takoma Park, D. C., reports the exhibit this year somewhat smaller than usual, due to the fact that several of the members saved their flowers for the exhibit of the National Capital Dahlia and Iris Society. There were between twenty and thirty exhibitors, with the greatest activity in the classes for collections and artistic arrangements. The outstanding exhibit of the show was that of Mr. H. C. Skeels, who showed splendid specimens and varieties. In the class for twenty-four Mr. Emerson and Dr. Hooker had fine exhibits, Dr. Hooker's immense specimens of *Ballerine* and *Magnifica* creating considerable excitement among the visitors. No seedlings were exhibited for judging, but Mr. Morrison showed a small group of his seedlings, including among others, *Impressario*, *Oread*, *Petruccio*, *Anchorite* and *Astellia*.

### New Haven, Conn.

On June 8th The Garden Club of New Haven, Conn., and the New Haven County Horticultural Society staged a very successful Spring Flower Show. The Bronze Medal was won by Mr. J. B. Wallace, Jr., who scored the highest number of points in the Iris division, Mrs. Alice W. North being a close second. Mr. Wallace also won the vase offered by The Garden Club of New Haven, while Mrs. John Demarest was awarded the Bronze Medal offered by the New Haven Horticultural Society. An outstanding feature of the exhibition was the display made by Mrs. Louise W. Kellogg, of West Hartford, arranged according to the originator, and containing many of the expensive novelties. The seedlings shown by Miss Theodora Van Name and Prof. Van Name, of New Haven, and by Miss Frances Ives, of Meriden, and Mrs. Foster of Seymour, which covered two entire tables, were the center of much interest. The judges, Mrs. Wheeler H. Peckham, Dr. George M. Reed, and Mr. R. S. Sturtevant, awarded Certificates of Honorable Mention to Miss Van Name's No. 88, rating 8.4, a great improvement on *Eldorado*, and to her No. 60, rating 8.1, which somewhat resembles *Lent A. Williamson* but with more substance and a rather bluish tone to the standards. In the competitive classes the outstanding varieties were a stalk of *Golden Promise*, shown by Miss Ives, and a vase of *Iris longpetala*, shown by Mrs. North. Mr. Wallace says Mrs. Peckham's entry in the class for twelve distinct varieties, which took first prize, went far to support the contention that intelligent cultivation will make some of the older varieties hard to beat by the more expensive novelties not so well grown.

### Omaha, Neb.

The Garden Club of Omaha, Neb., held its Third Annual Flower Show on June 2nd and 3rd. It was a very fine show, with many exhibitors, and much enthusiasm was shown. There were many entries in the Iris division, Mr. Hans P. Sass winning the Bronze Medal offered by the A. I. S. Messrs. Jacob and Hans P. Sass judged the open classes, while Messrs. Judson, Gowe and Klingbeil judged the seedlings. The Sass brothers exhibited many fine seedlings, Certificates of Honorable Mention being awarded to four of H. P. Sass' seedlings. No. A-11, rated 9.0; standards light lavender violet, falls; Bradley's violet, high branching 40-42 inch stalk. No. Y-3, a fine Empire yellow self, stalk 28-30 inches, rating 8.8, No. 29, rating 9.0, standards: dull bluish violet; falls, Dauphins violet; an extremely large flower, stalk 36 inches,

well branched and vigorous. No. 122, rating 9.2, a very fine self of Manganese violet; Candelabra effect in branching, heavy 40 inch stalk; flower larger than Magnifica. Mr. Jacob Sass' exhibit of peonies was the center of much interest, one of his seedlings being the outstanding flower of the show. While I am not in favor of awarding Certificates of Honorable Mention to seedlings at shows, feeling that they should be judged only in gardens, I am glad, as long as it is the policy of the Society to offer these Certificates, we were able to cooperate with the Omaha Club, thus allowing Mr. Sass to show some of his seedlings for judging. I think the Sass brothers, though they have worked with irises for fifteen years, have only introduced eight varieties from the many acres of seedlings they are now growing. They have set a very high standard of excellence for their seedlings to reach before being introduced, I quite agree with Mr. Judson, one of our Omaha members who says "The Sass brothers, with acres and acres of seedlings, live up to the expressed principle, promulgated and taught by our Society, to be very careful about introducing new varieties."

#### **Portland, Oregon**

The First Annual Iris Flower Show was held in Portland, Oregon, on April 22-23, and from the press notices, I am sure a very fine one. It was staged by the Iris growers, with the cooperation of the Oregon Florists' Club and the American Iris Society. As it was the first attempt, no prizes were offered, nor would the Committee accept the Bronze Medal which was offered them, though complying with all the requirements of the A. I. S. Mr. Weed spoke before several of the noon-day Luncheon Clubs during the week preceding the show, the local Rotary Club having given, in its Bulletin, quite a little publicity for the Iris. I trust this is but the first of many Iris shows, as the interest is seemingly growing throughout the state. With such enthusiastic members as Mrs. Minto, Mr. Weed, Dr. Clements, whose gardens contain hundreds of varieties, the iris should soon be as generally grown as is the rose.

#### **Nashville, Tenn.**

The "Iris Fanciers" of Nashville, Tennessee, who have for several years staged very successful non-competitive iris shows, this season decided not to have an exhibition but to sponsor the Open Garden movement for Nashville. That it has been a wonderful success, bringing to hundreds a greater appreciation not only of the iris but of all flowers, shrubs and trees, is shown by the wide publicity given in the local papers, The Nashville Tennessean having a three column article, prepared by the very efficient Secretary Mrs. K. P. Wright. Among the gardens open to the visitors were those of Chancellor Kirkland, Dr. L. C. Glenn, C. P. Connell, Dr. Celia Rich, Mrs. A. Loveman and Mrs. Wright, all members of the A. I. S. While Chancellor Kirkland and Dr. Glenn were the first to hybridize the iris in Nashville, Mr. Connell has done more to popularize the Iris in the city than any other person, having bought the best varieties on the market and planted them in Centennial Park. This planting was visited by thousands and resulted in many more enthusiasts. He planned the shows which have been held in previous years, and has given from his very fine collection to other gardeners that the iris might become better known throughout the state.

Miss Sturtevant, Miss Case and Mr. T. F. Donahue were the only exhibitors of irises at the exhibition held on June 5th., and 6th., by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Mr. Donahue received the Gold Medal of the M. H. S. for his display of irises covering twenty-five feet. Miss Sturtevant, aside from her extensive exhibit of named varieties, showed many of her seedlings. Among outstanding varieties were Magnifica, Queen Caterina, Mlle. Schwartz, Souv. de Mme. Gaudichau, Kashmir White, Gold Imperial, Hope, Mary K. Williamson, Shekinah, Anne Page, Swazi, Ballerine and Polaris. Exhibits of Tree Peonies, Salpiglossis, Pentstemons, Fuchsias and Pelargoniums added greatly to the general effect of the show. The A. I. S. did not have the pleasure of cooperating in this show.

#### **Chicago, Ill.**

Chicago held its first iris show on June 5 in the beautiful garden of Paul Battey in Glencoe. The show was organized by the Glencoe Garden club. It was an invitation affair, members of garden clubs in Chicago and outlying towns being the guests. It was not a competitive show. The tables were arranged under the pergola extending from the Battey home to the peony garden. The setting was unusually beautiful with the rock garden on one side and the woods on the other. The outdoor show has the decided advantage of giving a truer color value to the blooms exhibited. Often under electric light indoors, the colors lose much of their brilliancy, particularly the blue purples.

## Tid Bits, 11th

A music critic at the end of the opera season,—his twentieth, confided that he craved a week in a boiler factory to rest his ears,—something different. Much the same ne plus ultra sensation steals over the iris vagrant tramping from garden to garden and from nursery to nursery as he encounters the endless procession of innumerable purple bicolors, good irises all but reminiscent as an Old Settlers' Picnic. Some are larger than others. Some are taller than others, some darker, some lighter, etc. but all with a deadly familiar look.

The differences among a great many of these flowers are mere nuances and few of us are sufficiently ethereal to dwell happily in so rarified an atmosphere. The writer is for a moratorium on purple bicolor irises as for one, two, or three years. Then sort the heap and if any are worth distinguishing by name send them out. Purple bicolors are the easiest of all irises to raise from seed. We all have them but let us keep them in our own gardens until a test of time and observation tells whether there is any real place for them.

This fed up feeling is very cleverly characterized as "horticultural indigestion," by E. H. M. Cox, the talented editor of *The Garden*. The remedy is a change of diet. The yellows and variegatas will give the necessary filip to make the purple bicolors more palatable. It is the monotony that palls more than the individual flower. We need more variegatas and yellows in the garden. Otherwise it will lose its attraction.

This fact was brought home to the writer in a negative way when large masses of old variegatas were removed to make way for better irises, but no great number of variegatas among them. The deadening effect the following season with the patches of yellow to bring up the purples, lavenders, lilacs, and violets gone was distinct and definite and a matter of comment and question as to what was missing. The proportions of the prescription should be about one variegata or yellow to three of every other color. It was with much interest that I read a catalogue note of Miss Sturtevant's concerning the brilliant effect of liberal plantings of yellow in her garden. Her conclusion is based on more sound logic than mine because mine was based on a negative while hers is a positive.

The yellows and bronzes make the most brilliant showing in an iris planting and it is also true that the whites and blues and pinks are the most effective mingling leaving the yellows with the bronzes and red purples.

Besides varying the diet with variegatas there is the still more effective method of trying other sections than the tall bearded. This is really the most effective stimulant to flagging interest. It is an interest that is enjoying a very healthy growth among members of the American Iris Society. There is also an increasing interest in the small iris species for rock gardens due to the unusual popularity this style of gardening has achieved in the last two years. This growth marks the development of a real interest in plants that has not heretofore existed.

We are indebted in very large measure to Mrs. Louise Beebe Wilder for this phase of development in American horticulture, a very beautiful and effective one. Mrs. Wilder's book and her magazine articles have started rock gardens popping up all over the country. They are the most inspirational of garden literature because so thoroughly American and so completely in sympathy with conditions as we find them, not imported theories.

In this section of the country there is a growing demand for irises for the rock garden. One most desired is *Iris lacustris*, which is native to the Great Lakes region, but is now very rare. There seems no supply of it. The visit of M. Henri Correvon and his interest in these little irises was an added inspiration to the growing interest. He has promised to help us out with these fascinating miniatures.

*Iris cristata* is now well distributed and we have learned that it has considerable variation from deep to light blue. *Iris verna* has been a beautiful subject in the rock gardens hereabouts. *Iris arenaria* is a gay little visitor and others are domesticating themselves.

Those of us who are interested in raising seedlings occasionally find a dwarf in our seed beds, that is to say, a late blooming iris of the tall bearded class that for some reason remains a miniature. When these little fellows are of good form and color they should be saved, for they will make a class by themselves for rock gardens which will be of great value.

*Iris reticulata* is also in great demand with no supply in the country that the writer knows of. Mrs. Azro Fellows had this bright little bulbous iris shining through the snow in her beautiful garden in Belvidere, Ill., on Easter Sunday, April 4. It showed color much earlier only to be engulfed by one of our too frequent blizzards but came through unscathed. Mrs. Fellows also has in her rock garden the much desired *I. lacustris*, *tectorum*, *gracilipes*, *araneria*, *verna* and some others.

She is gathering a fine collection of the beardless kinds. "I have Emperor, Red Emperor, True Blue, Perry's Blue, Wilsoni, fulva, foliosa, dichotoma, Dorothea K. Williamson and several others, and have more on my list to be added. I am very much pleased with *tectorum*, blue and white," she writes.

Mrs. Grace S. Dyer of Oakland, Cal. writes that she is specializing in *sibericas* and beardless species and is anxious to learn how the new Asiatics of the *Siberica* class and their hybrids behave. Mine have shown varying vigor. *I. chrysographes* seems as strong and vigorous as the *sibericas*. *Bulleyana* is likewise flourishing but *I. Forrestii* is not so sturdy although two clumps decided to make a live of it. They seem slower to come to blooming size with me than the *sibericas* as I have yet to see their flowers.

Thanks to Mrs. Dyer I was able to identify a "*siberica*" with glaucous leaves and veined falls as a Californian, *longipetala*, the Dykes description confirming her suggestion and I have seedlings of several forms of this iris she was kind enough to send me.

"*Longipetala* will grow in a moister place than *Douglasiana*," writes Mrs. Dyer. "They both germinate in the same kind of soil. *I. longipetala* out here grows in boggy land in some places, in others on hillsides, dry as a bone in summer. They respond to the moisture better, however. *Longipetala* grows as readily as *sibericas* in my garden."

In response to queries as to the particular soil and cultural needs of *Dominion* and the *Dominion* race and the reason it was at first so difficult to establish some interesting correspondence is at hand. After following the *Dominion* trail for some time to see what might be the matter of the plant, it now seems quite apparent that there was nothing at all wrong with it if given half a chance. The main difficulty apparently was that coming from the free fields of England into contact with American bureaucracy proved, in many cases, too much of a shock. It shrunk and shrivelled.

Plants that had enough life left after their fumigation and inspection to recuperate and make new shoots have formed the basis of as



sturdy a stock as could be desired. American propagated plants now seem to be as vigorous as any of them. They are growing vigorously in Illinois nurseries, where they were very difficult at first, and have taken kindly to different soil conditions.

It seems evident that the Dominions are partial to soil with a good supply of humus and like a little more moisture than the average iris. This seems to be the chief deduction from such information as I can amass.

Mrs. Hires, chairman of the show committee, sends some interesting notes on her experiences with the Dominion race as follows:

"At present I have Dominion, Moa, Canopus and Titan. Some day I hope to have Swazi, Bruno, Majestic and Duke of Bedford.

"Dominion, a very small rhizome, was planted in August, 1922. At that time we were living on a small farm in Bucks County. This county has the name of having the finest farm soil in Pennsylvania. The garden was in full sun, protected from the north winds; level ground, beds not raised, but good deep loam, no clay. In early May, 1923, the rhizome had seemingly made no growth, and I was greatly disappointed, so much so, that I paid no attention to it the rest of the summer. By fall, however, it seemed to have decided to grow, and in the spring of 1924 had five offsets. There was one bloom stalk from the center fan; first bloom June 15,—last bloom June 25th. June 26th, I divided it, setting out the five offsets and the spent rhizome. All except one offset and the old rhizome, I used that summer for exchanges."

"In August we made a new Iris garden on a northwestern slope; beds raised five to six inches. The soil was the same good loam mixed with grit from the roadside. I had wanted to add sand to the loam but the gardener wheeled in the grit from the road, where the gutters had been filled with the sweeping of sand, small stone and soil. He thought this better than bar sand, and the irises seemed to think so too. Lime was added and all thoroughly mixed before the plantings were made. Later the old rhizome was potted for the winter and sent up two leaf fans. While away in March 1925 it was too well watered and one fan was lost. From the offset planted at the farm in August 1924, I had in May 1925 four offsets which by August were good sized rhizomes. Two were exchanged for other desired varieties. The other two and the pot grown one were planted in the new garden here in town. Each had two nice offsets by October 1st., but as the soil is not nearly as good as that at the

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farm, it remains to be seen whether they will do as well. Soil here is a heavy clay loam.

"All beds are raised, and a good handful of bone meal was used to each rhizome. I always use bone meal in planting.

"Titan was received last summer and planted in the Iris bed August, 1925. By the middle of October it had made five offsets.

"Canopus planted at the farm the fall of 1924 stood still for a year, but since being transplanted to the town garden in September 1925 has sent up two offsets.

"Glamour planted at the farm the same time as Canopus sent out no new roots. Merely shrivelled up. Never had a rhizome do that before.

"Moa received fall of 1925. Had two offsets and one small eye swelling. Remains to be seen what it will do. The spent rhizome, which bloomed in 1925, was also planted in the garden, but threw no offsets.

"I feel that Dominion has done very well for me. In fact it has grown far better than many. Avalon, for instance, has stood still for two years, and last fall was only four or five inches high. Will try peat for it this spring, as Mr. Wayman has a wonderful block of it in his garden and his gardener told me they used peat. On the other hand San Gabriel is growing splendidly. One rhizome threw five offsets the fall of 1925.

"Mesopotamica is growing very well. The center fan winter killed the first year, but the offsets are all growing nicely. There were five the fall of 1925.

"Balboa and Ramona are rampant growers. Planted August 1925, one had eight and the other five offsets by the middle of October."

Reports from the Quality Gardens at Freeport say that the Dominions, of which Mrs. Pattison has a very fine collection, gave magnificent blooms. Now that the cultural difficulties seem to have been solved by the establishment of domestic plants, the only remaining criticism that seems sound is that they are a little too short for their massive bloom and that there are a number too much alike. Hybridizers will undoubtedly put height into them and they should then give us as perfect a flower as could be desired if, along with height, is transmitted the Dominion texture and substance.

It has always seemed an excellent plan to me to investigate carefully these plants that seem foreordained and predestined to die before experimenting with them, as I have a prejudice against witnessing the death throes in my own garden. If they must practice their Calvinistic tenets I don't want them in my garden which has had a Congregational bring-

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ing up. Dominion, I think, may be exonerated and declared a good character. It is something else to lay at the door of the F. H. B., which some of us think needs disinfecting much worse than any iris that falls into its clutches.

Looking over the files of bulletins it is remarkable to find so much information on a single plant genus. I do not recall any similar accumulation of valuable data. With this fine material at hand it is a simple matter for any member of the American Iris Society with a little practice in gestures, foot work, and breath control to develop into an iris orator. It is necessary only to amass excerpts from the bulletins to be able to talk from five minutes to an hour or two as desired before any organization desirous or willing to listen.

The writer gave the proposition an excellent tryout this spring and found that it worked out nicely, breath holding out, but the footwork and gestures being a bit uncertain. In these garden club talks it developed that in three clubs there was not a member of the A. I. S. It seemed strange that if the clubs were sufficiently interested in irises to inflict a talker upon themselves concerning whose powers of oratory or persuasion they knew nothing, they did not belong to the American Iris Society, where they could get the information first hand and read it at their leisure and much more restfully.

Upon developing the question as to lack of membership there seemed to be much misconception as to the nature of the society and its purposes for one reason or another, some of them purely local and personal and of no weight, but there was one I couldn't answer and that was that it was "Too educated," and then, apologetically, "Of course, I don't mean you," after which I felt much relieved.

The one criticism that seemed to me to have some sound foundation was that it did not hook up with the garden; while it was excellent for the study of the iris itself, it did not give the average gardener anything much in the way of gardening advice. The garden clubs have developed some very keen gardeners and they ask embarrassing questions, the one that kept confronting me when an iris was mentioned, "What is its use in the garden?" having me scratching my head and saying to myself, "Well, I'll bite, what is its use?"

With this idea in mind in looking over the bulletins, the one factor that seemed lacking in order to make the A. I. S. a more popular organization is definite information as to the arrangement and placing of irises

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in the garden. It is quite true that when we become deeply engrossed in a subject very often we can't see the woods for the trees and perhaps the individual iris has obscured the true use of the plant to some extent, that it is, after all, merely a garden plant and its sole function is decorative.

With this garden idea in mind I began a canvass of garden ideas with the query that had stumped me always in mind, "What is its use in the garden?"

The most puzzling and perhaps the most important question is in regard to plants to follow the blooming season of the iris. It was very definitely suggested but, of course, in a very genteel way by one garden club member who has a very beautiful garden, that a garden devoted chiefly to irises when in bloom was all that heart could desire or the imagination paint in beauty and display but after the irises had bloomed it greatly resembled perdition for the rest of the summer. Mine often looks just like that, and after the irises are gone I feel like the poetical gentleman who trod alone a banquet hall deserted.

If members of the iris society will send in notes as to how they disguise their irises after they bloom without hurting them and make the garden heavenly instead of the antithesis for the rest of the summer they will be conferring a favor on hundreds of gardeners.

Mine for many years has been a gaillardia and perennial aster garden after the irises, chiefly because these two plants stand the drought and do not interfere with the irises. I usually plant the asters among the irises and allow them to droop over them and furnish a new show in September. But there is the infernal interim. What to do, what to do.

Last summer's protracted drought furnished some interesting developments concerning the growth of tall bearded irises in relation to bud formation. The drought in my section continued until well into September. The formation of the sister shoots on each side of the developed fan was delayed so late that the little points were just beginning to show when a hard freeze the first week in October caught them. The bloom stalks are much fewer this year than in several seasons as the development seemed to go all to the side fans this spring while the central blooming points shrivelled in many cases.

Irises suspected of being tender such as mesopotamica, Mme Durrant, Leverrier, J. B. Dumas and others came through the winter in fine shape although showing few buds. They had plenty of cold weather and some of the worst thawing and freezing we have experienced in some

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time. Several plants were torn from their roots and the arrested development complaint is again in evidence, but hilling them up as soon as detected has given the plants a fresh start and they are catching up rapidly. It seems evident that this trouble can be checked if watched for as soon as spring opens.

Anna Farr has responded to cave man treatment. Despairing of ever seeing her bloom, she was yanked up, broken up, and dumped in an out of the way corner to do or die. Her beautiful white and pale blue blooms were the result.

Perry's Blue for massing with Snow Queen is one of the most beautiful subjects among all the irises. A broad band of this fine iris on the estate of Harold L. Ickes in Hubbard Woods, a Chicago suburb, is a beautiful sight in its blooming season. Mr. Ickes' woodland carpeted with narcissus and mertensia is one of the finest garden pictures in the Chicago district. The Perry's Blue and Snow Queen irises take up the same color note on the border of the woodland. Stocks of Perry's Blue are now plentiful. It comes fairly true from seed, giving some fine forms.

Iris florentina, unlike the leopard, can change its spots. It hasn't them this year. The numerous comments and queries about the spotty character of the Florentine last year are an indication of the growing interest not only in irises but in plants in general. Iris florentina has been arraying itself in spots and stripes on occasion for centuries, probably, but it is only the growing interest in irises that attracted general notice to this trait. It is not changing color nor is it about to do so. It will be white one year and speckled another. The reason, it seems to me, depends upon conditions of moisture, the spots appearing in unusually dry springs. This, however, may be merely a coincidence. What really causes the change I do not know as my education in the operation of anthocyanin is extremely limited. I doubt if anybody knows exactly why it distributes itself in such peculiar manner.

Attractive garden bits observed by way of answering "What is its use in the garden?" are:—

Iris flavescens, perennial flax, and Papaver rupifragum, the last two a suggestion from Mrs. Wilder and a very attractive combination except for the fact that they can rarely be seen after noon as the poppy moults and the flax closes.

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Two season's experiments with California grown Spanish irises have proved failures with me. The bulbs did not appear in the spring.

Chicago gardeners report their best success with Spanish iris grown with Regelio-Cyclus iris and under the same conditions. The treatment of the latter which has proved substantially successful and resulting in a fine display of the huge and weirdly colored blooms has been outlined by members of the gardeners' association as follows,—Soil—very well drained rich soil lightened with lime rubble, mortar, or hard coal ashes to keep it open. Planting time—About October 20. Mulch, three inches of straw and leaves after the ground is frozen solid. Remove litter when the frost is out of the ground, retaining it as a mulch between the rows.

Emphasis is laid upon the necessity of the mulch and that regeliocyclus irises must be kept moist during their growing season. After blooming the plants are allowed to dry off. When the foliage has turned yellow, they are dug, shaken free of soil, dried in the sun for two or three days, hung in burlap bags in the cellar. Caution is given not to cut off the small roots. The blooming season is the second week in May.

Spanish iris given the same treatment have grown remarkably well, increased and produced bulbs of fine quality.

The writer sincerely hopes that every member of the American Iris Society has written to the Department of Agriculture to let the powers that be know that the very fine piece of work done by Mr. B. Y. Morrison in the farmers' bulletin on irises is appreciated. Every member who can qualify as a farmer in particular should speak up. Horticulture gets none too much encouragement from the department, possibly because horticulture doesn't give the department encouragement. We can do our part of the work. Mr. Morrison's bulletin is a very fine addition to iris literature and the writer believes it to be of much more value from a gardening standpoint than Mr. Dykes' last volume before his untimely death. It is sufficiently comprehensive from a botanical standpoint for

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all gardening needs. It is well written, avoids technical language, and is straight to the point on cultural matters.

The American Iris Society is a co-operative organization and its operation and direction a labor of love which is usually a thankless task. There is no garden too small to furnish an interesting note or two. What are your favorite iris combinations? What do you use to furnish bloom after the irises are gone? What are your favorite color combinations of irises? This last proposition is one that need worry us less than in any other race of plants for we have difficulty in going wrong except with a very few irises such as Magnifica and Edouard Michel which seem best by themselves. The writer was once accused of being an artist because of his exquisite color arrangement of irises. The secret of being such an artist is herewith transmitted in a correspondence school course of one sentence for the small price of this bulletin. I had planted them in alphabetical order until I got acquainted with them and decided where I wanted to put them. It is easy to be an iris artist. Send in a few notes so these tid bits will not be so largely a monologue.

A correspondent complains about the names attached to irises. "Where, for instance," is asked, "did anybody find such a heathenish name as Shekinah?" A shibboleth, truly. I have nicknamed a shoe height amoena, Bildad, using the same numerology. We may need more names from the same source so I refuse to betray a trade secret.

"What diversitie soever there be in herbes, all are shuffled up together under the name of a sallade. Even so upon the consideration of names I will here huddle up a gallimafray of diverse articles," says the Lord of Montaigne. That is the way it is done, an ancient and honorable practice.

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